

Senior Year College-Bound Calendar & Checklist

AUGUST

- Determine your career interests and decide which kind of college best suits you: large or small, public or private.
- Write to the admissions offices or visit the web sites of the colleges you are interested in. Obtain information on admissions, scholarships and financial aid.
- Be wary of scholarship search and financial aid service organizations that charge a fee for service. You can search for free at www.collegeplanning.org, and we can help fill out your FAFSA after Jan. 1.
- Use our College Checklist to keep track of all the admission and financial aid deadlines for the colleges you are considering.

SEPTEMBER

- If you are in the top 15% of your class, check with your guidance counselor about the State of Iowa Scholarship application.
- Register to take the SAT and/or ACT tests if you have not already taken one or both of them.
- Visit with college admissions counselors when they come to your high school.
- Ask your teachers and administrators to write letters of recommendation for your admission and scholarship applications.
- Visit with your high school counselor about application deadlines for specific scholarships, such as local or state sponsored scholarships or grants.

OCTOBER

- Take the SAT and/or ACT again OR for the first time. Take them now in order to qualify for the State of Iowa Scholarship.
- Begin writing essays for your admission applications, if necessary.
- Attend a college fair in your area.
- Select at least three colleges at which to make an on-campus visit (if you haven't already):
 - Call the admissions office for an appointment.
 - Visit with students and faculty.
 - Find out which financial aid applications are required, and when they are due.
 - Are there special application procedures required by the college?

NOVEMBER

- Narrow your college choices.
- Begin submitting your admission applications to your college choices. BE AWARE OF DEADLINES!
- State of Iowa Scholarship applications must be submitted to your counselor by Nov. 1st.
- Obtain financial aid forms from the colleges, if different from the FAFSA.
- Start learning how campus life will contrast with living at home.
- Attend a financial aid presentation during the next few months.

DECEMBER

- Pick up a copy of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) at your high school guidance office or call the College Planning Center toll-free at 877-272-4692. This form is used to determine financial aid eligibility. Begin working on it, but DO NOT SIGN OR SUBMIT BEFORE JANUARY 1.
- Finalize your outside grant & scholarship applications.
- STAY FOCUSED! Grades in your senior year can affect your admittance to the college of your choice.
- PARENTS: Save your year-end payroll stub if it shows your earnings for the year. You may need it for estimating information on the FAFSA.

JANUARY

- It is *very important* to check priority dates for submitting the FAFSA with your college choices.
- Submit your completed FAFSA to the processor AS SOON AFTER JANUARY 1 as possible.
- REMEMBER! Keep copies of all forms you submit to colleges and agencies.
- Ask your high school to send your first semester transcripts to the colleges where you applied.
- PARENTS: Get your federal income tax returns prepared early. Colleges may request copies to prove eligibility for financial aid.

FEBRUARY

- Check to see if your first semester transcripts have been received by the colleges you applied to this fall.
- Submit your FAFSA if you have not already done so.
- Begin making plans for a summer job.
- Watch the mail for letters of acceptance from the colleges you applied to this fall.
- REMEMBER! Second semester grades are important and can affect your scholarship eligibility.

MARCH

- Watch for your Student Aid Report (SAR), which is the result of the FAFSA you filed. If you have not received your SAR within four weeks, call the Federal Student Aid Information Center at 1-800-4FED-AID.
- Contact the financial aid office at each of the colleges you listed on your FAFSA to see if they have received your SAR information.
- Be prepared to submit a copy of your federal tax forms to the college(s) of your choice.
- State of Iowa Scholars are notified of awards.

APRIL

- Compare the finalized aid packages from the colleges to which you have been accepted.
- Make a final decision about the college of your choice. Send the required deposit, and sign and return the financial aid award letter if required. Note other important deadlines at your college (financial aid, housing, etc.).
- Notify the other colleges to which you applied that you will not be attending.
- If you are borrowing a student loan, you must complete the required promissory note.

MAY

- Take any AP or CLEP exams for which you qualify.
- Finalize summer job or college plans.
- Ask your high school guidance counselor to send a final grade transcript to the college you have chosen.

GRADUATION!!!
PAT YOURSELF ON THE BACK
FOR A JOB WELL DONE!

JUNE

- Make sure to notify the college about any outside scholarships that you have received.
- Save money from your summer jobs. You'll be glad you did!

JULY

- Be sure to attend any orientation sessions your college offers. This is a great opportunity to meet people and get familiar with the campus.
- Education is something no one can take away from you! Make the most of it!

THE COLLEGE PLANNING
CENTER
WISHES YOU GOOD LUCK WITH YOUR
EDUCATIONAL GOALS!